

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 07916 01 OF 02 141842Z

42

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7634

INFO WHITE HOUSE

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMCONSUL MILAN

AMCONSUL NAPLES

AMCONSUL TRIESTE

AMCONSUL ZAGREB

US MISSION NATO 3338

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT IMMEDIATE

SECDEF WASHDC

CNO WASHDC

JCS WASHDC

CSA

CSAF

USCINCEUR STUTTGART

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN

CINCUSANVEUR LONDON

CDR USASETAF VICENZA

CDR 40TH TAC GP AVIANO

CDR 8TH SUPPORT GP LIVORNO

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 7916

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SWEL, IT

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION TO VICE PRESIDENT ROCKEFELLER IN ITALY

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PAGE 02 ROME 07916 01 OF 02 141842Z

WHITE HOUSE PASS VICE PRESIDENT

AVIANO PASS LAGAMMA

SUMMARY: VP VISIT GIVEN THOROUGH BUT RESTRAINED COVERAGE TV NEWSCASTS IN CONTEXT OVERALL QUAKE STORY. EXTENSIVE AND FAVORABLE REPORTAGE ALL DC RADIO NEWSCASTS INCLUDING FRIDAY MORNING EDITORIAL. SOCIALIST RADIO NEWSCASTS COVERAGE BRIEFER AND MAIN THURSDAY EVENING RADIOCAST OMITTED MENTION VISIT. PRESS COVERAGE COLUMINOUS AND GENERALLY POSITIVE. CONSERVATIVE-CENTRIST COVERAGE EXTENSIVE AND EFFUSIVE. CENTER-LEFT CORRIERE AND LA STAMPA COVERAGE DETAILED, FACTUAL, GENERALLY POSITIVE. SOCIALIST COVERAGE FRAGMENTED AND SARCASTIC. COMMUNIST PRESS DOWNPLAYS WARM RECEPTION, MENTIONS HEAVY SECURITY, ELECTORAL IMPLICATIONS, DOUBTS ABOUT DISPOSITION OF AID, DISRUPTION OF RECOVERY BY VISIT. OVERALL COVERAGE HIGHLIGHTS POLITICIZED NATURE OF MEDIA AND TV PLAY ILLUSTRATES DC CAUTION TO AVOID OVERPLAY AND SOCIALIST DESIRE TO DOWNPLAY IMPACT.
END SUMMARY.

1. /NEWSPLAY/:

TV - TV COVERAGE ON BOTH CHANNELS THOROUGH BUT RESTRAINED ON MAIN EVENING NEWSCASTS, WITH MINUTE-PLUS FILM CLIPS OF VISIT INCLUDED IN OVERALL QUAKE COVERAGE. COMMENTARY FOCUSED ON VISIT TO DEVASTATED OSOPPO, VP STATEMENTS ON US DETERMINATION TO HELP, EFFICACY OF ITALIAN RELIEF EFFORT, COURAGE OF PEOPLE. ALSO, REPORTED CONGRESS VOTED AID IN ONLY THREE HOURS, AND AID DIRECTOR WILL REMAIN TO COORDINATE RELIEF PROGRAM WITH ITALIAN AUTHORITIES.

DC RADIO CHANNEL CARRIED EXTENSIVE AND POSITIVE RADIO REPORTAGE ALL ASPECTS OF VISIT. PSI RADIO CHANNEL CARRIED BRIEF FACTUAL COVERAGE BUT MAIN 1900 NEWSCAST OMITTED VISIT ENTIRELY. FRIDAY MORNING DC CHANNEL REPORTED VICE PRESIDENT'S ARRIVAL IN WEST BERLIN AND QUOTED PRAISE FOR SPIRIT OF EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS. REPORTER AGAIN MENTIONED THE AMOUNT OF AID GRANTED AND EDITORIAL PRAISED VISIT AND U.S. AID.

2. PRESS - EARTHQUAKE DEVELOPMENTS CONTINUE TO DOMINATE
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PAGE 03 ROME 07916 01 OF 02 141842Z

PRESS. ALL PAPERS COVER VP VISIT WITH MOST CARRYING EXTENSIVE AND DETAILED STORIES WITH SEVERAL PICTURES SHOWING VP MEETING LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POPULATION. CONSERVATIVE AND CENTRIST PRESS FRONTPAGE STORIES FOCUS ON WARM RECEPTION, VP STATEMENTS AND US SOLIDARITY IN GLOWING TONES. CORRIERE DELLA SERA AND LA STAMPA CARRY DETAILED FACTUAL COVERAGE, GENERALLY POSITIVE. SOCIALIST PAPERS CARRY FRAGMENTED ARTICLES WITH SARCASTIC COMMENTS ON STRICT SECURITY MEASURES.

COMMUNIST PAESE SERA AND L'UNITA' REPORT VISIT INTERFERED WITH RESCUE OPERATIONS, STRESS LINK WITH US ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN, IGNORE POPULAR RESPONSE TO VP, AND WONDER WHAT WILL REALLY HAPPEN TO US AID MONEY. LOCAL PRESS COVERS VISIT EXTENSIVELY AND SENTIMENTALLY.

IL MESSAGGERO VENETO (UDINE) DEVOTES FIRST TWO PAGES TO PICTURES AND ARTICLES ON VISIT, EMPHASIZING SOLIDARITY. IL PICCOLO (TRIESTE) AND IL GAZZETTINO (VENICE) CARRY LONG FRONTPAGE ARTICLES AND PHOTOS STRESSING VP'S STATEMENT "WE ARE AT YOUR SIDE."

1) LEONARDO VERGANI IN CORRIERE DELLA SERA FROM UDINE REPORTS: "THE VISIT TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE STRONG ITALO-AMERICAN COMMUNITY IN THE U.S. WHICH IS WORRIED LEST WASHINGTON FORGET THE URGENT NEEDS OF ITS COUNTRY OF ORIGIN. THERE WERE SOME POLEMICAL WINDS SURROUNDING ROCKEFELLER'S ARRIVAL. SOME MENTIONED THAT THERE WILL BE ELECTIONS IN AMERICA IN NOVEMBER, BUT THOSE WHO ARE IN THE EARTHQUAKE AREAS," VERGANI SAYS THAT "SOME NOTED THAT ALL OF THESE SLOWED THE ASSISTANCE OPERATION. EVERYTHING COULD HAVE BEEN DONE MORE SIMPLY...EVEN ROCKEFELLER SEEMED DISTURBED. HE WALED TOWARDS THE TENTS, ENTERED SOME OF THEM. TO A FAMILY THAT LOST A SON HE MENTIONED THAT HE TOO HAD LOST A CHILD IN NEW GINEA. HE APPEARED TOUCHED, HAD WORDS OF CONSOLATION...ON VP'S STATEMENT THAT AID MONEY WILL BE GIVEN TO ITALIAN GOVERNMENT FOR DISTRIBUTION, VERGANI CONCLUDES: "PERHAPS NOBODY EXPLAINED TO THE VICE PRESIDENT THAT AMONG THE TENT DWELLERS THE FEAR OF THE BUREAUCRACY IS ADDED TO THE FEAR OF THE EARTHQUAKE."

2) LUIGI GAMBACORTA IN IL TEMPO FRONTPAGE FROM UDINE: "EMOTION AND REAL PARTICIPATION TRIUMPHED OVER THE UNAVOIDABLE CONFUSION THAT ACCOMPANIES THE LIFE OF THE POTENTATES OF THE WORLD. NELSON ROCKEFELLER WAS ABLE TO SEE THE EARTHQUAKE, UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 04 ROME 07916 01 OF 02 141842Z

TO UNDERSTAND, TO GRASP THE ENORMITY OF THE TRAGEDY AND PERHAPS HE WAS REALLY SAD. THE DISASTER IMPOSED ON HIM THE LAW OF SORROW AND ANGUISH...WHEN HE ENTERED THE TENTS STILL FULL OF WATER FROM THE RAIN, HE DID NOT LIMIT HIMSELF TO OFFICIAL HANDSHAKES BUT PICKED UP THE CHILDREN, CONSOLED THE PEOPLE. THE PHOTOGRAPHERS WERE ABLE TO DO A GOOD JOB THIS TIME, BECAUSE THE SCENE WAS AUTHENTIC.

3) FRONTPAGE ARTICLE IN IL RESTO DEL CARLINO AND LA NAZIONE BY UDINE CORRESPONDENT: "ROCKEFELLER BROUGHT THE SOLIDARITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, HE WALKED AMONG THE PEOPLE OF OSOPPO. HE FOLLOWED NO PROTOCOL. HE EMBARCED THE WIDOWS AND THE ORPHANS AND WALKED THROUGH THE RUINS TO TALK TO THE WORKERS... HE APPEARED TOUCHED AND TROUBLED." VOLPE

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PAGE 01 ROME 07916 02 OF 02 141854Z

42

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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 7916

4) PIETRO RADIUS FROM OSOPPO IN IL GIORNALE: "THIS
DEMONSTRATION OF SOLIDARITY WAS RECEIVED WITH GRATITUDE BY
THE EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS...THE PEOPLE OF UDINE, WHO APPLAUDED

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PAGE 02 ROME 07916 02 OF 02 141854Z

THE VICE PRESIDENT SEVERAL TIMES, ALSO SHOWED THEIR GRATITUDE. THE ITALIAN AND AMERICAN SECURITY SERVICES WERE OF COURSE MOBILIZED BUT THERE WAS OBVIOUSLY NO NEED. AMERICA IS DEAR TO THE HEART OF THE FRIULI PEOPLE, WHO FOR MANY GENERATIONS HAVE GONE THERE TO WORK."

5) MARCELLO GILMOZZI IN FRONTPAGE EDITORIAL IN IL POPOLO: "ROCKEFELLER'S PRESENCE IN THE DISASTER AREA IS A DIRECT AND EXEMPLARY TESTIMONY TO THE SPIRIT OF FRIENDSHIP AMONG OUR TWO PEOPLES."

6) LA STAMPA'S DETAILED FRONTPAGE ACCOUNT FROM GIULIANO MARCHESINI IN UDINE HAS 3-COLUMN PHOTO OF VP EMBRACING QUAKE VICTIM AND NOTES THAT "THE NEWS OF THE ARRIVAL SPREAD TO THE MOST DISTANT TENTS."

7) FRONTPAGE ARTICLE IN IL GIORNO BY PIER MARIA PAOLETTI FROM UDINE HAS HEAD "ROCKEFELLER IN FRIULI IS TOUCHED AND FULL OF ADMIRATION...THIS TRIP HAS GENERATED SEVERAL INTERPRETATIONS, BUT MOST OF ALL IT IS A SINCERE DEMONSTRATION OF UNITY IN A TIME OF TROUBLE...AND ALSO IN CONSIDERATION OF THE VOTE OF THE ITALIAN COMMUNITY IN THE U.S. , WHICH IS PARTICULARLY SENSITIVE TO THIS GENEROSITY." SAME PAPER CARRIED FRONTPAGE REPORT FROM OSOPPO BY ENZO LUCCHI NOTING THAT "THE VICE PRESIDENT CERTAINLY IS NOT PRETENDING IF TEARS ARE ROLLING DOWN HIS CHEEKS."

8) LA REPUBBLICA INSIDE PAGE STORY REPORTED : "IT WAS ROCKEFELLER HIMSELF WHO ASKED TO VISIT THE RUINS AND THE TENTS, WHERE IN A VERY AMERICAN MANNER, HE EMBRACED EVERYBODY."

9) IL MESSAGGERO INSIDE PAGE ARTICLE BY LANFRANCO PONZIANI FROM UDINE: "BOTH ROCKEFELLER AND THE DELUGE FELL ON OSOPPO AT THE SAME TIME. HIS GORILLAS WERE RECONNOITERING THE AREA FROM EARLY MORNING, LOOKING INTO THE SMALLEST DETAILS, A WOODEN GANGPLANK, FOR EXAMPLE, TO AVOID SPLASHING THE VICE PRESIDENTIAL SHOES."

10) AVANTI* CARRIES BRIEF SUMMARY OF VP'S PROGRAM, EMPHASIZING "CONFUSION," IN VISIT, BY ENZO MANDARINO FROM UDINE IN OVERALL ARTICLE ON QUAKE.

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PAGE 03 ROME 07916 02 OF 02 141854Z

11) PAESE SERA CARRIES REPORT FROM UDINE BY ANDREA SANTINI,

WITH FRONTPAGE AND BACKPAGE PHOTO COVERAGE. CAPTION UNDER FRONTPAGE PHOTOGRAPH: "EXCEPTIONAL SECURITY MEASURES FOR THE LIGHTNING VISIT OF VICE PRESIDENT ROCKEFELLER". CAPTION UNDER INSIDE PAGE PHOTOGRAPHS: "VICE PRESIDENT KISSES HAND OF A WOUNDED WOMAN, AN IMAGE THAT IN THE U.S. CAN ALSO TAKE ON SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THIS PHASE OF ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN." REPORT STATES: "HUNDREDS OF AGENTS AND CARABINIERI, TAKEN AWAY FROM THEIR WORK AMONG THE DEBRIS, FILLED THE CITY WITH A SEA OF UNIFORMS...A SPOKESMAN SAID THAT VICE PRESIDENT WAS IMPRESSED BY ENORMOUS ASSISTANCE OF GOI. BUT NOT A WORD ON THE WILL, THE DIGNITY, THE STRENGTH OF THESE PEOPLE HIT BY THE EARTHQUAKE. THIS IS HOW IT ENDED."

12) L'UNITA' INSIDE PAGE ARTICLE BY FABIO INWINKL FROM UDINE EMPHASIZES IN SARCASTIC TONE SECURITY MEASURES, THE REMOVAL OF EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARIANS FROM AREA, FINDS "COINCIDENCE OF THIS GESTURE WITH THE AMERICAN PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN, IF WE CONSIDER THE WEIGHT OF THE ITALO-AMERICAN COMMUNITY."

13) IL MANIFESTO CARRIES ARTICLE BY STEFANO BONILLI FROM UDINE: "ALL QUESTIONS FOCUS ON ONE POINT: WHO WILL HANDLE ALL THESE BILLIONS. RUMOR CANNOT ANSWER, THE NBC NEWSMEN SNEER..." "TO WHOM WAS THE 21 BILLION LIRE GIVEN? HERE EVERYBODY IS AFRAID OF GOVERNMENT THIEVERY."

COMMENT: VP'S VISIT HAD SOLID AND MOVING IMPACT, DESPITE CARPING FROM THE LEFT. WE SUSPECT BUT UNABLE VERIFY THAT BALANCED BUT DISCRETE TV COVERAGE DC CHANNEL REFLECTS POLITICAL DECISION NOT TO OVERPLAY AMERICAN CONNECTION. PSI CHANNEL TV COVERAGE GOOD, BUT TRUNCATED SOCIALIST RADIO AND PRESS COVERAGE INDICATES DESIRE PLAY DOWN FAVORABLE IMPACT. COMMUNIST PRESS OBVIOUSLY HOPING DISCREDIT WARM RECEPTION BUT THEIR COVERAGE INCLUDING PAESE SERA PAGE ONE PHOTO VP EMBRACING QUAKE VICTIM MORE EXTENSIVE THAN SOCIALISTS'.VOLPE

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